



FRIENDS of Great Salt Lake  
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FRIENDS of Great Salt Lake is a nonprofit organization founded in 1994. The mission of FRIENDS is to preserve and protect the Great Salt Lake Ecosystem and to increase public awareness and appreciation of the lake through education, research, and advocacy. The long term vision of FRIENDS is to achieve comprehensive watershed-based restoration and protection for the ecosystem.

The inspiration for the formation of FRIENDS came from the work of the Mono Lake Committee, a nonprofit organization that fought for many years to protect Mono Lake from excessive water diversions to Los Angeles. In 1983, the California Supreme Court rendered a decision in support of the MLC's arguments that the state had an obligation to protect Mono Lake even if prior water allocation decisions needed to be reconsidered.

In 1993, the founders of FRIENDS felt that there was no existing organization that could advocate for the preservation and protection of the lake and so proceeded to incorporate as a 501 c (3).

Since 1996, FRIENDS has been hosting a Biennial Great Salt Lake Issues Forum. The purpose of the Forum is to bring the broad spectrum of Great Salt Lake stakeholders and the community together to encourage constructive dialogue about the future of the lake's ecosystem and its resources, and to illuminate the complexities involved in research, management and planning for the lake.

At the 1996 Issues Forum, 4 major threats to the future of the Great Salt Lake Ecosystem were identified and provide the basis for our education and advocacy work.

- Ignorance about the ecosystem
- Development on and around the lake
- Water diversions for a growing population
- Water quality and increased discharges

In 1997, FRIENDS initiated a major regional informal education project designed to enhance both knowledge about and care for the future of Great Salt Lake. A live narrative slide show program – The Lake Affect: Living Together Along the Shores of Something Great was created. The program is available on DVD, and has been donated to public libraries and schools in the 5 counties surrounding the lake.

In 2000, FRIENDS began developing a 4<sup>th</sup> grade science curriculum (Project SLICE) using Great Salt Lake as a system of study. It currently consists of 7 units of study, a Speaker's Network, Teacher Training Institute and Lakeside Learning Field Trips.

In 2002, the Doyle W. Stephens Scholarship was established to provide support for undergraduate and graduate students engaged in new and ongoing research that focuses on Great Salt Lake and the watershed. Dr. Stephens was a research hydrologist with USGS ,who had done extensive research on the lake. He died in May 2000.

In 2008, FRIENDS hosted the Joint Conference of the International Society of Salt Lake Research and the Great Salt Lake Issues Forum – **Saline Lakes Around the World: Unique Systems with Unique Values**. More than 200 participants from 19 countries attended the week long event. Many of the world’s leading experts and conservation groups that work with saline systems in different states and countries conferred with Utah’s scientists, managers, and community members. The event provided a major contribution to the study and management of saline lakes around the world. The conference was supported by strong local sponsorship.

FRIENDS strives to build collaborative partnerships to promote Great Salt Lake watershed health and habitat sustainability. We work to execute effective public outreach and involvement to help people become better informed about lake issues, and to help them understand why it’s important to care about the lake.

Affiliations/Processes include:

Great Salt Lake Alliance  
Jordan River Watershed Environmental Advisory Committee  
KUCC North and South Technical Review Committees  
Westminster College Environmental Advisory Committee  
GSL Water Quality –Selenium Standard  
Utah Linking Partnership  
Legacy Parkway and Nature Preserve Collaborative Design Team

Some Old & New Issues

The Legacy Parkway and Nature Preserve  
Proposed Oil and Gas Development in Gunnison Bay  
Proposed Expansion of Great Salt Lake Minerals  
Proposed NPL of US Magnesium as a Superfund Site  
Tooele Valley SAMP Process  
Great Salt Lake Shorelands Plan  
Northwest Quadrant Planning  
Proposed expansion of GSL International Airport  
Holly Pipeline Project  
UPDES permits

Awards

1998- Conservation Achievement Award by the Utah Chapter of the Wildlife Society.

2006 –Calvin K. Sudweeks Award by the Utah Water Quality Board for outstanding contributions to the water quality field.